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Thesis

THE CRISIS AT CAESAREA PHILIPPI

Submitted by

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(A.B., Cornell College, 1922)

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INTRODUCTION.

The great crisis event in the life of the religious personality which Israel gave to the world took place not within the confines of the Holy Land. It was at Caesarea Philippi, in pagan territory, where all the luxurious pagan life was rampant. In a place where Jewish life was hardly represented, Jesus of Nazareth experienced the crisis of His ministry. The events which had preceded, found their consummation in this experience; and the events which followed had as their source the experience which occured at this point. Klausner (1) would view this event, next to the baptism by John the Herald, as probably the most important event in the history of Jesus and of Christianity. Rall (2) says that at this time was "perhaps the greatest hour in Jesus' ministry".

This thesis is concerned with Caesarea Philippi. The thesis here developed is: Caesarea Philippi was a crisis to Jesus in that it was an expression of what He had been thinking concerning Himself, this conviction being forced home by the logic of the circumstances; and a crisis as to what His next move would be. This was a crisis to the disciples in their thot of Jesus; a correction of their thot was needed.

We will use as our basic sources the Synoptic Gospels: Matthew, Mark, and Luke. We will limit our field

1. Jesus of Nazareth. 298.
2. New Testament History. 109.

of study to these records; not entering into a technical consideration of the time written or the external influences exerted on the Evangelists.

First, however, concerning the event itself.

THE EVENT.

Description.

The great central event in the ministry of Jesus is given to us in the three Synoptic Gospels. Mark (1) and Luke (2) give us the account in four verses each, while Matthew, for the parallel material, allows five verses.(3)

Inasmuch as we will follow the account in Matthew as the basis, we incorporate his version:

> "Now when Jesus came into the parts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say that the Son of Man is? And they said, Some say John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others Jeremiah, or any one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. ..... Then charged he the disciples that they should tell no man that he was the Christ."

This conversation, accoring to Dawson (4),

1. Mark 8:27-33.
2. Luke 9:18-22.
3. Matthew 16:13-16, 20.
4. The Life of Christ. 230.

took place on the way to Caesarea Philippi, probably when the band of disciples stood almost at its gate; also, that the conversation was continued in Caesarea Philippi itself, because so grave a theme would not be summarily dismissed.

Historical Events.

The first question we ask ourselves, is, what are the historical events leading to Caesarea Philippi? Approximately three years Jesus had been preaching in Galilee. His work had at first met with popularity; but in the course of time had appeared signs of dissatisfaction among the people concerning Him. At the very peak of His ministry, Jesus had sent out the Twelve on a preaching tour. As soon as they returned, probably to Capernaum, Jesus took them across the lake to a place where He knew they could be alone. While there, a multitude of five thousand followed; Jesus hurried His disciples off in a boat, telling them to go to Bethsaida at the head of the lake. This they were unable to accomplish on account of a hard wind; instead they landed at Gennesaret. They went thru the towns with Jesus. There came conflict concerning the ritual observance and the demand for a sign. Events made it necessary for them to leave; this small band went thru Galilee into the territory of Sidon. There followed, by a long circuit, a trip thru the Greek cities of the Decapolis, finally to Bethsaida, and hence northward, keeping in the territory of Philip, until

Caesarea Philippi was reached.(1)

The Historicity Questioned.

That the event which we have described as taking place at Caesarea Philippi is historical, is almost universally accepted; and yet it has been questioned. Wrede declares this scene to be unhistorical: "It is simply another phase of the process of the messianization of Jesus' unmessianic career, and the command for silence which is Jesus' prompt response, puts the scene into the same class as the demoniac encounters".(2) If such a view as Wrede expounds is accepted it "results in an almost complete source skepticism".(3) Bousset (4) criticises this view of Wrede's, as follows: "I do not consider his position tenable. The essential point of his argument is that he seeks to discover a consistent tendency in our gospels according to which Jesus intentionally concealed his Messiahship during his lifetime, ... a tendency resting perhaps upon the historical fact that Jesus never wished to be Messiah". Shailer Matthews has given a detailed criticism of this view which is convincing. (5)

We cannot agree with Wrede in his conclusion regarding this event; and in consequence, will consider it as a historical fact. If it were not viewed as such, then the very problem with which this thesis is concerned, would no longer be a problem.

1. Headlam. The Life and Teachings of Jesus. Headlam's chronology followed.
2. Bundy. Our Recovery of Jesus.
3. " " " " "
4. Jesus. 172.
5. Historical Life of Jesus. 186.

The Crisis.

As indicated in the title of this thesis and also in the statement of the objective of this thesis, we view this experience at Caesarea Philippi as a crisis. The crisis concerned Jesus. The events moved about Jesus. The great crisis in His life revolved about the fact that the preceding events, by the very nature of them, had caused Him to ask the question as to the kind of Messiah He would be. This event, then, becomes an expression of what Jesus had been thinking.

The Messianic consciousness did not for the first time appear to Jesus at Caesarea Philippi. This peculiar feeling He had of being the Messiah, had been present to Him for some time; probably finding its first thot as early as the baptism experience at the Jordan, where He had a unique sense of relationship with God and of a mission to perform. Since that time there had been the deciding of the kind of Messiah He should be. It would be impossible to dissociate this from the external events. The temptation experience had been one of decision to Jesus. There, in general terms, He had determined the kind of Messiah He would be: He would live and act according to the will of God. But this designates no more than the direction His life would take. It remained for this tendency to gradually grow into a conviction as to the kind of Messiah He would be. The general tendency had to be made concrete. Now He was faced with the concreteness of the kind of

Messiah. The events which followed the temptation had caused Him to think in explicit terms on the subject. The failure to interest the people and the opposition aroused, caused Jesus to consider the possibility that He might be a Suffering Messiah. This idea gradually grew into a conviction. This conviction was more frequently forced home by the logic of the circumstances.

Trouble In His Ministry.

The circumstances which influenced the thot of Jesus, were the experiences He had with the people in Galilee. His career there had not been free from trouble. Events had occured which indicated that if He continued in His work, even tho He be the Messiah and knew Himself to be the Messiah, there was the possibility that He might have to suffer. He was incurring opposition at a point where it was exceedingly sensitive. And this spirit of opposition which He was creating was to react so as to make Jesus fail in winning the people. These experiences had a very distinct influence on the development of the kind of Messiah He was to be.

The real basis of difference between the people and the religionists of that day and Jesus, is to be found in the simple fact that their view of religion was what it was and the view of Jesus on this subject was what it was. Rall (1) has put it well when he says, "The study of Jesus' teaching and practice shows the real

1. New Testament History. 95.

ground of the differences. It was not simply personal hostility. It was a wholly different conception of religion and righteousness. For Jesus' opponents, religion was a sum of laws that God had given, and of rules or traditions handed down by the fathers, which made clear the application of the laws, and which were almost more sacred than the laws themselves. A religion of life and the spirit faced here a religion of law and tradition."

This difference was evidenced and accentuated thru more concrete instances which served to lower Jesus in the eyes of the people and to create this spirit of opposition to Him; these were the concrete expression of the underlying basis of difference. Circumstances such as these directed the thot of Jesus as to the kind of Messiah He would be. The growing conviction that He might be a suffering Messiah was forced home by the very type of these circumstances and the reaction which they caused upon the people.

They accused Jesus of being a friend of publicans and sinners (1) and a person of such a nature was not of a type to be received. Then also, He attended their feasts (2), and was gluttonous and a wine-biber.(1).

He had told a man that his sins were forgiven (3) and such words were no less than blasphemy coming from Him. For who could forgive sins, they reasoned, other than God?

1. Matthew 11:19. Luke 7:34.
2.Matthew 9:11.
3. Matthew 9:2. Luke 5:20.

There had been the conflict over the observance of the Sabbath; resulting from the disciples plucking grain as they went thru the fields (1), and Jesus healing in the synagogue on the Sabbath, a man with a withered hand.(2) And there had come that most 'un-Jewish' statement from Jesus: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath". (3). This is all the more significant when we remember the paramount place accorded to the overt elaborateness of regulation of this day. When Jesus went against this regulation, He scraped one of the sacred prejudicies of Judaism. Headlam (4) would place this as the point the breach with organized religion became acute.

Even the people in the town where He had been raised, Nazareth, rejected Him.(5). Klausner (6) says, "They did not perceive the transformation that had been effected in Him, and He could not give them signs and proofs testifying to the fundamental change in His spiritual powers. He left Nazareth in despair, never to return."

Jesus also did an unheard of thing in departing from orthodoxy in the reading of the bible. For an obscure boy to come into the synagogue and to take the authority upon Himself to read other than they had done for centuries was almost bidding for opposition. This departure, Grant (7) explains, was as follows: "The bible was written

1. Matthew 12:1-8.
2. Matthew 12:9-14.
3.Mark 2:27.
4. The Life and Teachings of Jesus. 196.
5.Matthew 13:53-58. Mark 6:1-6a. Luke 4:16-30.
6. Jesus of Nazareth. 282.
7. The Life and Times of Jesus. 92.

in Hebrew, read in Hebrew and then translated into Aramaic, the tongue of the people. They devoted themselves especially to the Torah, explaining by certain methods then in use, and showed how it appliedto daily life. They often told stories to show clearly what was meant. They made up 'parables' and quoted proverbs; above all they quoted the sayings of the great rabbis of the past. In the same manner Jesus conducted the service but He went a step farther than did the other leaders, and departed from orthodoxy, in that He not only quoted the sayings of the great rabbis of the past, but gave His own meaning, which was an advance."

As Wendt (1) explains, the Jews felt assured that the true revelation of God was contained in the Scripture, and they held to the letter of the same. But with Jesus, the assurance that the Old Testament contained the true revelation of God, was not founded on the idea that all the words of the Scripture were of equal value, and must be regarded as having the same absolute authority.

In consequence, He did not t ake from the Old Testament indifferently, but He discriminated and chose, and left large portions of it wholly to one side. He set scripture against scripture; He went back of the Mosaic law of divorce to assert a higher law. (2). He definitely set aside, upon His own authority, certain of the Old Testament precepts or laws,(3), which the people regarded as holy and unchangeable.(4).

1. Teachings of Jesus. Vol.2. 31.
2. Deut. 24:1. Mark 10:2-12.
3. Matthew 5:38-39.
4.Rall. New Testament History. 63.

It incurred opposition when Jesus sought to substitute a few simple and meaningful principles for the involved and intricate system of regulation for the guidance of conduct. While He sought not to upset these forms, He did seek to point out the moral and spiritual content of them.

There was opposition incurred due to a variance of views concerning the kingdom of God. This meant in Jewish faith, the rule of Israel; God would overthrow her enemies and set Israel upon the throne. For God was the king of Israel, and that meant the rule of Israel and armies and thrones. But with Jesus nothing was said about Rome, nothing of the overthrow of Israel's enemies and her triumphant rule. What He had to say did not concern men as Jews, but men as men. And with Jesus, the king was Father, holy and loving, and Father of all men, and meant the reign of righteousness and peace and good will which Jesus set forth as the heart of God. (1).

That assumption of authority which Jesus had was unwarranted, in the sight of the people. Garvie (2) would find the source of this authority in His personality: His perfect moral character gave Him uneering moral insight; and His absolute religious consciousness gave Him unfailing spiritual vision.

Evidently the opposition reached the stage

1. Rall. New Testament History. 69.
2. Studies In The Inner Life of Jesus. 198.

where Jesus was charged with destroying the Law. This was an exceedingly serious charge, because the Law was viewed as sacred and if such a charge could be confirmed, He could be put to death. But in defending Himself, Jesus tried to avoid trouble with the Law, holding the view that He had come to fulfil it.(1). Garvie (2), points out further instances where Jesus sought to avoid conflict with the Law, as when He recognized the duty of paying taxes to Caesar (3); when He told Peter to pay the Temple tax (4); in acknowledging that the scribes and Pharisees sat in Moses' seat, and bade the disciples obey their precepts, but not follow their practices (5); and altho He cleansed a leper, He would not supplant the priest in his office to declare him clean.(6).

The feeding of the five thousand was the climax of the impression which Jesus made upon the people of Galilee. The miracle which took place that day probably convinced the people that at last their Messianic hopes were to be fulfilled,and they hastened to seize Him and to make Him king.(7).

This was a serious situation for Jesus; for there was nothing which His enemies could do which would be so fatal to His purpose. If the kingdom of God could be made to appear as an earthly political movement, it would wreck all that He had accomplished. And if Jesus could be

1. Rall. The Life of Jesus. 112.
2. Studies In The Inner Life of Jesus. 256.
3. Matthew 22:15-22.
4. Matthew 17:24-27.
5. Matthew 23:2-3.
6. Luke 5:14.
7. Matthew 14:13-21. Mark 6:31-44. Luke 9:10-17.

escorted to Jerusalem as King, gathering people as they went, the popular hope could have been answered.(1). Headlam (2) writes, there was some basis for such a thot among the people, for the leading of a multitude into a wilderness---- that is, to the place where they found themselves ---- would be a natural prelude to an attempt at rebellion, and the assertion of claims to be king of Israel.

Apparently even the disciples shared this same feeling with the people, because He felt it necessary to see that they embark at once and leave.(3) And Jesus sent the multitudes away without granting their wish.

In commenting on the effect of this, and the words which Jesus uttered, Weiss (4) says: "On the surface it seemed as if things were the same but Jesus knew that after the feeding of the five thousand they were not. In order to put a stop to this He laid emphasis upon the fact that they could only be His disciples who were ready to undergo the most severe tests. When these people came to Jesus they had desired to receive, and not to sacrifice. Their attaining of the Messianic future was so varied that it would have divided the nation. It was with this picture before Him that Jesus laid such emphasis upon the increasing demands He was obliged to make upon His disciples. His claim was now that He be more to them than any they loved. (5). Strange words from the lips of one who heretofore had given blessings and who had only preached love. Then, the disciples of Jesus

1. Patterson-Smyth. Peoples Life of Christ. 293
2. The Life and Teachings of Jesus. 272.
3. Matthew 14:22.
4. Life of Christ. Vol.3. 24f.
5. Luke 14:26.

must be prepared for the severest form of suffering; for anyone who was not willing to take up his cross and follow Jesus was not a true disciple.(1). What terrible pictures these words called forth and what a future they painted. But the crushing effect did not cease. Before being a follower of Jesus, one must first consider the cost, the sacrifice which that calls for, and whether or not he is ready to stake his all.(2). And it is a good thing to follow Jesus only when united with perfect readiness to offer any sacrifice for Jesus' sake.(3). It was utterances like these which were destined to bring about the crisis among His followers. He had refused to grant what they hoped for most; and He required harder duties than they had dreamed of. And it was only possible that they could bear this, if they had really found in Him the highest good. With words such as these He brot to a close His work among those whom He had been with during the past months." It is not hard to see the effect such would produce among those who had followed Him; and when they thot He was to be their hope, He refused them, and they turned from Him.

There can not be much question but that Jesus knew of this opposition. As He pondered continually on this unique sense of relationship which He felt with God, the circumstances of the day would tend to direct His thot. First would be suggested the remote possibility that this opposition was not favorable to His work. Then, it might develop to a point where it would be active and definitely

1. Luke 14:17.
2. Luke 14:28-33.
3. Luke 14:34f.

hinder Him; it might develop to such an extent as to cause Him to suffer. This thot must have been forced home frequently. With so many lines of opposition present, it is only natural to find that there developed one or two points where the conflict became more acute and which precipitated a more serious crisis. This is exactly what we find.

Conflict More Acute.

There were two points which tended to bring this opposition to a peak; namely, concerning ritual observance and the refusal of Jesus to give a sign.

The sharp clash between Jesus and the Galilean Pharisees received the attention and presence of scholars from Jerusalem; who came one day concerning the practice of the disciples eating bread without washing their hands.(1) And Jesus with His clear insight into the very heart of a problem said that it was not what went into a man that defileth him, "but the things which proceed out of the mouth come forth out of the heart; and they defile the man."(2). It was such a conflict as this which Bosworth (3) says, "Terminated Jesus' work in Galilee, at least fort he time being." And Sanday (4) looks upon this event as the decisive action causing the widening breach. It cut away the root and branch of the Pharisaic traditions.

The result of this conflict with the elders

1. Matthew 15:1-20. Mark 7:1-23.
2. Matthew 15:18.
3. The Life and Teachings of Jesus. 123.
4. Outlines of the Life of Christ. 123.

meant that "for the time being Jesus had been beaten in the struggle. His declaration against the commandments as to purity contained in the law was so unmistakable, and then so clearly brot home to the people by His adversaries, that everyone was compelled to choose between the new religion and the old."(1).

Warschauer (2) says that the real crisis was precipitated by this encounter. And in making this declaration which set aside the supreme authority of the law, He burnt His boats and entered upon a conflict "a'outrance" with established religion. By explicitly setting aside the Mosaic regulations concerning clean and unclean food, Jesus forfeited a very large portion of the support and sympathy which had been His till then. In uttering the words, which to us are most significant and emancipatory, He played into His enemies hands with a sublime scorn of consequences of which He was immediately to become aware. At one blow, and irreparably, He Himself had terminated His career in Galilee. This radical declaration could not but complete the revulsion of feeling which had already begun to set in.

Then had come that second most crucial conflict, when the Pharisees came asking for a sign from heaven; and Jesus refused to give them a sign.(3).

Weiss (4) says concerning this, "In this case, as on all other occasions when they tempted Him with questions, they had regard to the impression that would be

1. Holtzmann. The Life of Jesus. 298.
2. Historical Life of Jesus. 156.
3. Matthew 16:1-4. Luke 12:54-56. Mark 8:11-13.
4. The Life of Christ. Vol.3. 11.

made upon the people. Jesus was to be summoned before all the people to produce His legitimation as the Messiah. If He declined --- and they knew He would --- He would be dishonored in the eyes of all as one who had advanced great pretensions, but was not in a position to substantiate them, and who was therefore forced to conceal His impotency by all manner of subterfuges. This would be to give a mortal blow to the still enthusiastic popular esteem for Him. Such was the explanation of the direct demand for a sign from heaven."

And they succeeded in their plans. Warschauer (1) holds that "impressive as are these declarations and denunciations, and impossible as it is for us not to see the Lord, with all His glorious inner confidence, towering above His adversaries, there was no denying the fact that the tactical victory rested with the Pharisees. Jesus could not show them such a celestial sign as would have been irrefutable proof of His actual contention ..... He could not efface the impression left by the refusal itself, which was no doubt interpreted and exploited in a damaging sense. A sufficient comment upon the serious nature of this episode is furnished by the sequel in Mark's Gospel, where the hasty return to Bethsaida is followed at once by the departure of Jesus and the Twelve for the far-north, into the non-Jewish region of Caesarea Philippi."(2).

The culminative effect of the opposition He had created together with the two experiences of a more acute nature tended to place Jesus more than ever in the

1. Historical Life of Jesus. 157.
2. Mark 8:27.

light of failing to appeal to the people and it was necessary for Him to leave. Not in the sense that He was hunted and to be arrested and turned over to the authorities, but in the sense that His message had failed to appeal to the people; He was unable to compel them to come His way. As Rall (1) says, "it was due to the failure of His appeal to the people that He left." They would not accept Him. He had tried to present His message to them in such a way as would appeal to them but He had failed to earn their cooperation and support. Instead it was advisable for Him to leave.

It is not inconsistent that there was operating in this decision to leave Galilee, both compulsion and choice. Eakin (2) points this out when He says that we cannot say with certainity the reasons Jesus left, nevertheless some are implied and of the reasons which may be suggested, it is to be noted that some make the withdrawal a matter of compulsion and others would explain it as rather due to choice; such as need of rest and feeling of need of time with the disciples. That compulsion and choice were both in operation is by no means incredible. For the motives which yield important decisions and actions are usually complex.

This view of Eakin we believe to be sound that there was operative in this decision both elements of compulsion and choice. Compulsion, in that Jesus had failed to compel the people to follow Him and it was necessary for Him to make some move; and choice, in that He wanted a period with His disciples.

1. New Testament History. 105.
2. Getting Acquainted with the New Testament. 361.

Now, if circumstances made it advisable for Jesus to leave Galilee, did these same circumstances influence His view of the kind of Messiah He would be? Would it be possible for Jesus to have the external expression of His Messianic Consciousness result in opposition and failure, without the results of this expression reacting on the growth and development of that attitude? We cannot believe that such would be possible. The inner growth of this consciousness was conditioned and influenced by the receipt of it by the people. Whatever might have been the first thots of Jesus concerning the kind of Messiah He would be, the subsequent thots would be conditioned by the circumstances of His success. Therefore, as He saw the rise of this opposition there came to Him, first dimly, the vague thot or feeling that He might be a suffering Messiah. As the events unfolded this thot came to stand in bolder relief, so that when He left Galilee the idea must have been pretty prominent in His thot.

The Break.

Leaving Galilee means that there was a break between Jesus and the people. What was the extent of this break?

The followers of Jesus were decreasing. In the recent weeks it had become plain that the Galileans as a whole would not accept Him, and many even of His disciples had turned away from Him. People who previously had thot He might be the Messiah were now saying that He was

John the Baptist, or Elijah, or one of the prophets.(1) Weiss (2) feels that there was no hope of Galilee when once it had become apparent that its people would not abandon their national expectations, and would not acquiesce in Jesus' apprehension of His Messianic calling. A more prolonged activity there, would have led only to renewed attempts to force Him to undertake the role of a political Messiah, or else would have been productive of a fruitless strife.

To Kent (3), to continue His work in Galilee was impossible, for it meant the increased opposition of the Pharisees and probably imprisonment and death at the hands of Herod. To seek permanent refuge in a foreign land meant inevitable disgrace andf ailure; for it was equivalent to abandoning His ideals and followers. Thus a temporary retirement was achieved in order to prepare the disciples for a greater crisis to come.

Barton (4) views the growing opposition with the events so arranging themselves that rapid movement from place to place and partial hiding were necessary. Opposition from Herod made it prudent to leave. The political and ecclesiastical forces were arranged against Christ, and sooner or later they would accomplish their aim.

As we have indicated by the views just quoted; the followers of Jesus were decreasing due to their variance of view as to the true function of the

1. Gilbert. The Students Life of Christ. 187.
2. Life of Christ. Vol.3. 45.
3. Life and Teachings of Jesus. 234.
4. Jesus of Nazareth. 270.

Messiah, the opposition was increasing so that, if it were not already necessary it would soon be, for Him to leave to avoid a fatal conflict with it. As to the view that opposition from Herod made it prudent for Jesus to leave; such a view would be only opinion. And if it is accepted, then would come the question as to what do with the statement from Herod, when Pilate sent Jesus to him at Jerusalem and He was returned with the statement from Herod that "nothing worthy of death hath been done by him."(1) In fact, the whole picture of Jesus and Herod at this time is not conducive to thinking that there was opposition from Herod toward Jesus.(2). In view of this, we would rather believe that the movement of Jesus had not gained such headway that there was arroused the opposition of Herod at this time. However, that does not mean, that if He had been allowed to continue for a sufficient period of time so as to organize His movement that there might not have been opposition incurred. This is conceivable; but as to being present now, that we would discard.

Was Jesus justified in creating such a break with the religious forces? As we have mentioned before the fundamental basis of discord is to be found in the fact that Jesus was what He was and the people were what they were. Therefore, for harmonious progress between Jesus and the religious forces it was necessary that one or the other make an adjustment. Either Jesus must make an adjustment to the current religious forces; or the current

1. Luke 23:15.
2. Luke 23:6-16.

religious forces must make an adjustment to Jesus. Jesus felt that He was justified in asking the people to make this adjustment and to bring themselves in harmony with His methods. That Jesus felt in this manner is implied in His statement after He had been approached concerning fasting, when He said that an undressed piece of cloth is not to be put on an old garment, nor is new wine to be put into old wineskins, lest they burst.(1) Thus, the only road open to Jesus, without accepting a compromise, was either that the people come His way, or a break occur between them.

When this break was once made, it was not of such a nature that leaving Galilee would cause the wound to heal. For we find that even after Jesus had been away from Galilee, during the time that He was in the north country, that when He appeared in Jerusalem they were as anxious as ever to get Him. In fact, if anything, they were more bold than they previously were, for at this time they directly plotted to secure Him in order to take His life. The leaving of Galilee did not mend the breach.

And so at the present time Jesus desired to get away from the public life; the operating motives being a mixture of compulsion and choice. The elements of opposition must have been evident to Jesus. There was now too much opposition in Galilee for Him satisfactorily to accomplish His work. They would also tend to influence His unfolding development as to the kind of Messiah He was to be. His main objective was constantly to adjust Himself to the will

1. Matthew 9:16-17. Mark 2:21-22. Luke 5:36-39.

of God. Therefore, there was no other way for Him to fulfil His Messiahship, except by fulfilling in such a way as would be in harmony with God's will. The course which He had followed, had been the only one which He could follow and at the same time remain true to God. He had seen this lead to opposition with the people. As He gradually saw more clearly the kind of Messiah He was to be, there could not be avoided the thot that if He kept upon the present course, there might arise the possibility of the opposition becoming so strong that He might fail to the extent of having to suffer for these things for which He stood and which He taught. These lines of opposition would tend to present to Jesus the probability of so failing to gain a hold upon the people, that He might suffer.

At the present time He had not succeeded with the people. They had refused His message; He was not compelling the people to Him. Altho Jesus sensed this rejection by the people, it does not seem as if He felt Himself to be a failure. To be sure He left, He knew there was opposition, but at the same time there must have been an inner feeling in Jesus of the possibility of succeeding later. It would seem so from the picture we gain of Him when He returned to Jerusalem, for He worked and ministered as if He hoped to accomplish something. For the present, tho, He had failed to accomplish what He wished in Galilee and there was opposition aroused to Him.

Political Opposition.

To what extent had Jesus incurred political opposition? We have reason to believe that Jesus did not feel Himself in conflict with the State, for when there came to Him one day certain of the Pharisees and Herodians seeking to trap Him in order that they might give Him up to the governor, they did not succeed.(1) Instead they found Him saying that they should render unto Caesar the things which belong to Caesar, thus indicating that Jesus did not feel a primary conflict with the State. Then also, the fundamental element running thru the teachings of Jesus was not of a political tenor, but of a spiritual nature.

Neither does there appear to have been on the part of the State a feeling of conflict. If there had been, it would hardly have been consistent for Pilate to find it so hard to find a justifiable charge against Jesus. Also, He appeared before Herod, who presided over Galilee, and Herod found no fault with Him. If there had been a feeling of grave opposition here, it is hardly conceivable that Herod would have dismissed Jesus with a clean bill, for there would have been the possibility of Jesus returning to Galilee; and if Herod had felt a point of conflict with Jesus he would have wanted to avoid this possibility. Then the words of Pilate indicate a lack of opposition: "nothing worthy of death hath been done by Him, I will therefore chastise Him and release Him." (1).

1. Luke 23:15-16.

Status In The Eyes Of The People.

The Galilean ministry was the stage in the work of Jesus where He achieved His greatest success. This success, as the subsequent events showed, was mostly hollow and not abiding. During this seeming success there were also visible evidences of trouble. These evidences we have considered. Bundy (1) calls attention to the fact that in the account we have in Mark there is a pessimistic undertone from the first day which Jesus spent in public. "At the very outset Jesus seems to meet with disappointment; He does not receive the response He desires; the people see the prophet and His cures rather than the cause He champions. The eager crowds and enthusiastic followers seem to have been attracted and held by His person rather than by His cause." The people were looking for their messianic hopes to be fulfilled by Jesus.

Their View Of Messiah.

When we endeavor to find the exact specifications of the Messiah whom the people were looking for, we immediately run into trouble. For, altho, they were looking for "the Messiah", there was no unified thot concerning the Messiah. The conception of the people as to the kind of Messiah differed. The thot of Messiah was of Old Testament origin. The people had the hope that sometime God would send them a messiah, or heavenly king, to deliver them from their oppressors, and to establish on earth the kingdom of God. Under the influence

1. Our Recovery of Jesus. 210.

of the succeeding years, following the conception of this hope, and under the external influences coming into Israel, there had developed by the time of Jesus a more or less general view of the messiah. The general aspect of the looked-for messiah, would closely correspond with that of a great earthly king of superior power, who would come and release the people from the oppressed influences under which they found themselves at that time.

It seemed at first that Jesus might be the one whom they had been expecting. But they soon found that the aims which motivated Him were not in harmony with their views. He did not seem to be interested in setting up an earthly kingdom of their dimensions, nor was He interested in being a king of superior earthly power.

This raises for us the question: what did Jesus think concerning Himself? What was His attitude concerning Himself?

Jesus' Own Attitude.

In 1901 Albert Schwietzer startled the theological world with His reconstruction of the Messianic question. He presented the consciousness of Jesus as exclusively messianic and that He knew He was the Messiah from the very first. That Jesus knew Himself to be the Messiah, we believe. But we cannot accept the view that Jesus knew this always. Rather there was a time when, altho He knew of the messianic hopes, He did not associate them with Himself.

Nor are we to believe with Bulcock (1), that the Messianic consciousness dawned on Jesus just previous to Caesarea Philippi and that the question which He asked suggested that the thot was just breaking in His mind. Neither can we accept the view of Warschauer (2), that the Messianic consciousness of Jesus was achieved at the time of the question by John the Herald (3), and from that time on there was a Messianic secret. Views such as these "are inconsistent with the story as we have it. Such a position would necessitate the rejection of the story of the baptism and of the temptation and also the whole character of the teaching of Jesus. Had He not thot of Himself as the Messiah, He could not have taught with the authority that He did. He could not have claimed to supersede as He did the old law and to introduce a higher theory of life than it had given. The whole record of His life is inconsistent with any less claim."(4).

Rather, we believe, that the Messianic Consciousness was possibly received by Jesus at the time of His baptism by John the Herald at the Jordan; or if not at the time of the baptism itself, at least immediately thereafter. By the Messianic consciousness we mean, that unique sense of relationship with God and of a definite mission to perform in the bringing in of the kingdom.

This is attested by Wendt; and Case (5) says,

1. Religion and Its New Testament Expression. 154.
2. Historical Life of Christ. 135-136.
3. Matthew 11:3.
4. Headlam. The Life and Teachings of Jesus. 283.
5. Jesus. 333.

"If the New Testament writers have read the experience of Jesus aright, He carried about within His breast, from the day of His baptism, a conviction that He was the individual chosen by God to establish the kingdom, as preached by Himself and earlier by John the Baptist." Berguer,(1), would place this either directly at the time of the baptism or immediately thereafter, when he holds that it seems clear that Jesus, in some sense or other, felt that He was the Messiah and the Son of God from the very beginning of His public career.

But the fact that Jesus felt Himself to be the Messiah does not necessarily involve that He received at that time the full revelation of all the thots He ever had concerning His Messiahship. Rather, after realizing His unique mission of the fulfillment of the Messianic hopes, there remained to be settled the kind of Messiah He would be. The germ, the seeds, were planted when this first dawned on Jesus and then followed the unfolding of the full extent of the content of this relationship.

Mahoney (2), tells us that the ideal religious person is not one who has suddenly come into the possession of religious attitudes thru a violent spiritual upheavel. Such an experience ought to be the exceptional and abnormal religious experience rather than the type to be striven for. The religious experience of Jesus may be taken as the ideal; the ideal religious experience being one which emerges steadily in its religious consciousness and adaptation, assuming the right relations to God and to man as life unfolds.

1. Some Aspects of the Life of Jesus. 239.
2. The Religious Mind. 147.

Thus the religious development of Jesus was not of a static nature, but more of an unfolding process. Forsyth (1) attests to this when he says, "His natural consciousness grew and the content of it grew, as He grew from child to man, and came to know the world. His spiritual consciousness, His sense of sonship, also grew, as He settled the conflicts that beset Him about His Messiahship". And Hall (2) writes: "The most enlightened common sense now inclines to the view that Jesus lived out His earthly life completely under the influence of His environment, that His first conception of His Father's business was carpentering, that He had a completely natural development, and had known the Messianic ideals objectively long before He felt any special personal relation to them .... Whenever He first conceived it with reference to Himself it must have given Him a great pause .... we never shall exactly know how Jesus felt when He fully realized that the glorious nimbus of Messianity was within His reach."

Sheldon (3) tells us that "the gospel narratives imply progressive unfoldment. One of the evangelists as much as definitely asserts a progressive unfoldment: Luke 2:52. And all three synoptists distinctly represent Christ as subject to temptation. Temptation is properly the experience of a growing subject and not of one who occupies the standpoint of omniscience. Even the nature of the temptation suggests an experience of growth

1. The Person and Place of Jesus Christ. 121.
2. Jesus,the Christ,in the Light of Psychology. 334-335.
3. New Testament Theology. 59-62.

or inward clarification. Also,the evangelists use language which naturally implies that Christ's experience included the unexpected, and that He was capable of the emotion of surprise. He marvelled at the extraordinary instance of both faith and unbelief. And, in disclaiming knowledge of a particular future event, Christ showed that the order of mental life to which He was subject admitted of an increasing content. We conclude then, that the sacred biographies invite us to believe that the Christ had a real childhood, and a real youth, and a real manhood, as being under the human law of growth, and as advancing not merely from the forseen to the actual, but from the unknown to the known as well.

"The progress of this unfoldment cannot be gauged with anything like precision. The subject is not directly reported upon nor are there many indirect tokens of this advancement. That there was a special inner revelation in the experience of the Jordan there is no reason to doubt, and whatever light was upon the spirit of Jesus in divine relations, He reached here a new stage in His advance toward a perfectly luminious self-consciousness. The temptation was a means of clarifying and settling His conviction concerning the extraordinary office He was to fulfil. Beyond this stage there is little ground for attempting to specify, tho it is quite credible that the events of His ministry may have contributed to a full-orbed consciousness of Himself and His position." In reference to the last sentence by Sheldon, we feel that there are evidences

that the events of His ministry did much to bring to its full development the kind of Messiah Jesus would be. And the events are those which we have considered in His relation with the people. It seems incredible that the opposition which was aroused would have no effect at all on the developing of the kind of Messiah Jesus would be. These, we feel, are linked close to the unfolding consciousness of Jesus.

Deissmann (1) says that the inner life of Jesus appears to have three stages: first, the basal groundwork is the quiet piety of His communion with God the Father and God the Lord. Second: a specific consciousness a consciousness of prophetic endowment of His mission. Third: the prophetic consciousness culminates in the Messianic consciousness. The peculiarity of the prophetic consciousness is this -- that the consciousness of communion with God is concentrated in the consciousness of a specific divine act. Jesus is conscious of being sent. The question of how this consciousness of mission arose in Jesus cannot be answered. This consciousness was not the result of reflection or of a process of exegetical study which made it from the beginnings His fixed and quiet possession. Rather, as a consciousness given by God, it had its flow and ebb. It was not present with Him always with the same intensity. It is sometimes replaced by a merely prophetic consciousness. It is a consciousness that dawns and then disappears, that blazes in heavenly clearness in great hours of revelation

1. The Religion of Jesus and The Faith of Paul 125-131.

before which He then, however, draws back in humility and simplicity. He does not refuse to speak about such experiences to those He trusts, but almost as soon as He has spoken of them, He desires to hide them again.

This view of Deissmann is acceptable to us, if we understand that this prophetic consciousness which culminates in the Messianic consciousness, was achievedin the sense we have indicated as our view of the Messianic consciousness. Also, that it was fluctuating in respect to the kind of Messiah that He might be, there being high points when He would realize more clearly that He might have to suffer.

We may assume then, that the Messianic consciousness was with Jesus from the beginning of His public career. This consciousness gradually grew into a conviction of the kind of Messiah He would be. The events He passed thru controlled to a large extent His thot in this connection. This growing conviction was forced home by the logic of the circumstances. So that when Jesus came to Caesarea Philippi, there came from Him the expression of what He had been thinking, because of His experiences.

Resume.

This brings us to the event at Caesarea Philippi. To this point we have contended that Jesus had known a Messianic consciousness probably since the baptism, or immediately thereafter. This Messianic consciousness

consisted in the sense of a unique relation to God and of a definite mission or activity in the building of the kingdom. This realization did not conclude the matter. As the subsequent events followed, they would leave their deposit in the mind of Jesus. These would tend to influence His view of Messiahship and would cause it gradually to develop into full understanding. This had been an unfolding process. The events of the past months contributed. He had endeavored to interest the people in His message, but He was not holding them. Gradually they were leaving Him. This had compelled Him to think seriously concerning the kind of Messiah He would be. He felt that He was the Messiah, but the experiences of the past months had shown to Him that His view of a Messiah and the view of the people were not harmonious. These experiences had also shown to Him that there was a grave possibility of His failing --- even to the extent that the opposition which He had aroused would eventuate in His suffering and possible death. This had been a growing conviction brot home by the force of the circumstances. It is with such a background that we approach this experience at Caesarea Philippi, which gives expression to what Jesus had been thinking, due to the recent experiences.

Should He Tell?

As the thots of Jesus became more and more concentrated and there commenced to stand out in bold relief the thot that there was a possibility of Him being a Suffering Messiah, Jesus would have to decide the question: Should He tell the disciples concerning this inner thot? Or

should He let the events take their course and as they unfold explain them to the disciples? It was no easy decision to make; it was of an epochal nature. The way in which He settled this question would influence mightily the subsequent events. As He thot over the past experiences, as He saw the extent to which the disciples were bound to Him, and as He thot of what might happen in the future, the culminative effect of it all, caused Him to decide to express to them, the thots which had been running thru His mind. He simply must tell them how He had interpreted these events, the way which He felt, and to correct whatever contrary thots they might have concerning Him and His mission. It was a tremenduous decision which Jesus made at this point.

THE PEOPLE.

The first question which Jesus asked, concerned the people: "Who do men say that the Son of man is?"(1). The answer which He obtained was: "Some say John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."(2)

It seems strange that Jesus would ask the disciples such a question. Schmidt,(3), would view this question as one which was asked after Jesus had determined to go to Jerusalem, and in view of the fact that there was a great danger in the Messianic speculations, the question was asked to gauge the full extent of this danger. This view of Schmidt's cannot be fully denied, and yet we do not believe that Jesus at this time had fully determined to go to Jerusalem. For, according to the records which we have

1. Matthew 16:13.
2. Matthew 16:14.
3. The Prophet of Nazareth. 276.

this was a later development.(1).

Plummer (2) would place the asking of the question for information secondary to the thot that it was asked from an educational motive, in order to lead to the crucial question which follows; and Micklem (3), views this first question as preparing the way for the challenge to personal confession. But these views seem hardly necessary, altho they cannot be denied. We would place these aspects secondary to what we consider a better reason. Namely: Jesus asked this question because He wanted to know what the people were thinking. He sought information; and He sought that information from the source where it could be obtained. That Jesus had some idea of what the people were thinking is most likely. But the disciples were better able to obtain the true thot of the people than He would be. So, He would ask them.

It is hardly possible that Jesus was surprised with the answer which He received. He was well acquainted with the current popular view of the Messiah. He knew that altho He felt a Messianic consciousness that it did not express itself in the popular form. Rather, it was much different. This He could see, was sensed by the people in view of the number who were leaving Him and the opposition which He had incurred. In view of this it would hardly be consistent to expect that the thot of the people would be expressed in terms of the Messiah. If it should be, it would

1. Luke 9:51f.
2. Commentary on Matthew. 225.
3. Commentary on Matthew 165.

be under their interpretation of the Messiah. There was only the remotest chance of this occuring.

Therefore with a feeling as to what the people were thinking concerning Him, Jesus asked the first question of the disciples, to secure from them the information which they had gained of the mind of the people. This the disciples were better able to do than He. By virtue of being the center of the entire movement He would not have the close contacts with the people as would the disciples. They would have a better opportunity to gain the true mind of the people.

It is also reasonable to suppose that the answer which Jesus received represented in a fair way the thot of the people. The action of the people, after the feeding of the five thousand, would indicate that they did not see in Him a Messianic fulfillment. And the subsequent desertion by the people at the time of His trial and His crucifixion would confirm the thot that they did not view Him as measuring up to their requirements of the Messiah.

We also ask, whether the question which John the Herald sought to have Jesus answer, represented a mode of his own thot, or whether he was here echoing a common and popular inquiry.(1). Barton (2) says, "It had been John's mission to proclaim that the coming of the kingdom was near, and, as he heard rumors of what Jesus was doing, he wondered if Jesus might not be the Messiah who was to bring in the kingdom". Headlam (3): "If God's

1. Matthew 11:2-6. Luke 7:18-23.
2. Jesus of Nazareth. 187.
3. The Life and Teachings of Jesus. 157.

spirit, working thru his natural powers, had taught him thru the Old Testament scriptures of the coming and the character of the Christ, if he had seen in Jesus of Nazareth that spiritual power which made him feel that there was 'the coming one', it was natural that he should send his disciples to ask the definite question, Was He the long expected Messiah?" Such statements would account for the individual development of this question in John. But at the same time there must have been external influences coming to him. The people also had some thots concerning Jesus; this they could not avoid. They had seen Him do things which no other man could do; He had assumed authority which was of Messianic aspect. It is only natural, then, that the thot of the people be directed toward an inquiring attitude concerning Jesus. This is especially true if we view this episode as occuring previous to the climax of the popularity of Jesus, which we do. Therefore, it would seem that this inquiry by John represented not only a mode of His own thot, but also, echoed the thot of the popular mind.

It is also to be noted that this inquiry was so pointed that it would hardly be possible for Jesus to avoid the implication containedin it as to who He was. He would almost be driven to self-examination. It would not be possible to avoid completely the implication contained therein --- Are you the Messiah? And the answer which Jesus gave to this question, would tend to support the view that He felt Himself to be the Messiah, but it would be the kind of Messiah His works exemplified.

It is to be remembered that at this time the people were not bound to Jesus in any form of an organized movement. Rather, it was more of a commotion; there was no definite and formulated program. He and His disciples went thru the countryside preaching. They came to a town or a community, and according to the information which we have, they did not leave an organization when they left the place. A program comes at a later date in this type of a movement; if Jesus had worked for a decade longer, the program probably would have been in evidence. If this had been a movement with an organization, and the people bound together by such an organization, it is entirely probable that the opposition which Jesus encountered would have been greatly minimized.

The fact that Jesus could perform miracles causes us to ask: Would miracles have quieted this opposition? First tho, the people's view of miracles in that day. Berguer (1) says that a miracle then was simply an exceptional marked sign of the presence of the divine or demoniacal forces which were continually at work in the natural world; everything that was inexplicable seemed miraculuous. Further, the people expected miracles of every hero. It was quite natural they thot, that an exceptional man should manifest himself by exceptional acts; and it was taken for granted that the Messiah would perform miracles.

Now, if these statements of Berguer are right,

1.Some Aspects of the Life of Jesus. 202-203.

then, in view of the popular thot of the people that the Messiah would perform miracles, it is only natural to suppose --- and it is pure speculation --- that Jesus might have stemmed the tide by the use of miracles; especially at the proper times. In any event, it would have showed to the people that Jesus was, in this respect, possessed of the qualities which they looked for in the Messiah. However, it is to be said, that one of the very reasons for the break was due to the fact that He would not perform miracles for them, and they, bound down to their tradition and the walls of their beliefs, were unable to rise above them and to see the true worth of this man.

The People's Thot of Jesus.

The answer which Jesus received from the disciples in response to the first question which He asked them, indicated that in the popular mind He had failed to accomplish the thing which He wished. As Weiss (1) expresses it, "The people no longer considered Him as Messiah"; "He fell below the popular expectation regarding the Messiah."(2) He was regarded as merely the forerunner of the Messiah. Klausner (3) says, "Jesus' teaching and manner of life did, in a great measure, conform to that of John the Baptist, or Elijah whom John initated, or to that of a prophet like Isaiah of Jeremiah who had rebuked the nation and preached goodness and righteousness."

As we have seen Jesus did not conform to the

1. Life of Christ. Vol.3. 52.
2. Gilbert. Students Life of Jesus. 187.
3. Jesus of Nazareth. 299.

standards of the popular Messiahship. Thus there were those who did not view Jesus as the Messiah. And from the answer which the disciples gave to the first question, it may be implied that Jesus stood in the eyes of the majority of the people as the forerunner of the Messiah; and not the Messiah Himself.

THE DISCIPLES.

Then had come the question to the disciples.

It is inconceivable that a group of men would leave their business operations and follow a personality like Jesus for a period of three years without sometime during this period at least raising the question as to who He was. Therefore, we may believe that the disciples had thots concerning Him. They had talked it over amongst themselves as to who He was. They had come to Him four or five times seeking to ascertain who would be the greatest in this kingdom which He was founding. That there had been speculation in the group is evidenced by the coming of the mother of the sons of Zebedee seeking a first place in the kingdom for her sons.(1). This would indicate that there had been some conclusions drawn among His inner group concerning Him; even tho these conclusions might be in need of purification.

The events preceding the journey into the north country must have been trying times for the disciples as well as for Jesus. They, being human, would desire that their leader gain popular favor. There must have crept into

1. Matthew 20:20-28. Mark 10:35-45.

their thots questions concerning this seeming refusal on the part of Jesus of popular support. We know that many of His disciples, that is of the larger group of His followers, left Him. The nature of the past events would allow for a necessity to rebind the disciples to Him. He had quickly sent the disciples away when the multitude became enthusiastic after He had fed them. He might have seen with the increase of popular enthusiasm that the disciples were leaning in that direction. It is possible that they so evidenced their feelings as being in harmony with the mass of people that the event had in a sense served as a 'realizer' to Jesus as to what the exact attitude of the disciples was toward Him. The events might have so reacted on the disciples that they were in need of seclusion from the people.

Then had come the journey thru Decapolis. They, as well as Jesus, were away from the people. They too could look back on the previous months of activity and could more clearly evaluate them. Then would also come time for them more clearly to think concerning who this was that they were following. It is possible that this period of retirement and fellowship had served also as a period when the view of the disciples was filtered into a purer state: a period of preparation for the next scenes which were to be enacted.

The Question.

It was immediately after Jesus had asked the disciples who the people thot He was that He put to them the question: "But who say ye that I am?" (1).

1. Matthew 16:15.

Why Ask,

Plummer (1) suggests that this question was asked because Jesus was seeking information. Smith (2), puts forth the same view when he says that the reason for the question is to be found in that "the answer would define the disciples attitude toward Him and reveal what profit they had derived from His teaching and whether they were fit for the trust which would by and by be committed to them." Carver (3) would say, that when the disciples began to follow Jesus they were not told who He was and it was inevitable that the time should come when they would define at His request "their experience of Him in terms of definite intelligent conviction." Robinson (4) writes: "the one essential was personal devotion to Him, and that was what He sought to secure from them." According to Rall (5) the questionwas asked because He wants their confession of His Messiahship, not because He has proclaimed it, but because they have seen it in Him. This question was asked in the opinion of Holtzmann (6) as a test of the result of the labour He has bestowed on them down to this time. Barton (7) says that the reason is to be found in that He "desired to make them understand if possible, the nature of His Messiahship and its relation to the real kingdom of God." Gilbert (8) says, "that their belief that He was the Messiah had already varied expression

1. Commentary on Matthew. 226.
2. The Days of His Flesh. 261.
3. The Self-Interpretation of Jesus. 108.
4. The Gospel of Matthew. 141.
5. Life of Jesus. 101.
6. Holtzmann. Life of Jesus. 321.
7. Jesus of Nazareth. 288.
8. Students Life of Jesus. 187.

and He desired to ascertain whether they still believed in Him." Dawson (1) gives as the reason one which we cannot accept, as is evident, when he says, "It is an interrogation which He had often addressed to His own consciousness. Perhaps He now sought corrobation of these inward thots, as friend may from friend, seeking to compare the verdict of His own consciousness with theirs." This is fallacious on two counts: first, it implies that Jesus would be guided in His thot with the answer which He received, which we do not believe; and second, the harmony would be merely in the name,"The Messiah", for as we shall see the content of the answer varied. Kent (2) gives a futuristic note to the reason why asked, when he says, "it is clear that this question to His disciples was intended to precipitate their opinions and prepare them for the probable fate which awaited them."

We see that there is a variance of opinion. We would not go so far as to say that there are no elements of truth in these various answers. There is. But in view of this variance of opinion we put forth what seems to be the most normal and natural reason why the question was asked, namely: because Jesus wanted to know what they were thinking concerning Him; and, if necessary, to correct their views so as to bring them in line with His own. This was brot about, as we have contended, by the circumstances which forced upon Him the thot that He might be a suffering Messiah. When this conviction became pronounced, then it was necessary that His thot and that of the disciples be harmonized.

1. The Life of Christ, 227.
2. Life and Teachings of Jesus. 235.

The Answer.

The answer which Jesus received to His inquiry is reported for us varyingly in the synoptics. There is however, as Dr.Lowstuter points out, a common element to be found in them. This is ascertained as follows:

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." (1).
"Thou art the Christ " (2).
" The Christ of God " (3).

In arranging the answers in this form it is clear that the common element in all of them is,"The Christ". These words are at least the jist of the answer given, and they also correspond much better to the impulsive nature of Peter than do the others.

Peter probably spoke for the entire group. He was not the elected spokesman, but he spoke because he was more impulsive than any other. As Bosworth (4) says, "probably few of the others could have said it so heartily and some could not have said it at all." Holtzmann (5) adds, "we can hardly suppose that at this time all the disciples held the conviction about Him. They were not of one mind to such an extent that, having been educated to hold certain definite views, they were bound to arrive at the same judgment about their Master, withthe stringent necessity that one deduce the final conclusion in a chain of mathamatical

1. Matthew 16:16.
2. Mark 8; 29.
3. Luke 9:30.
4. The Life and Teachings of Jesus. 223.
5. The Life of Jesus. 321.

reasoning. From the characteristics which had attracted them to Him they knew they had to deal with an earnest and holy man. Beyond doubt they all reverenced Him, but to have recognized in Him the ideal figure of the Messiah required a considerable amount of courage --- for it would mean the breaking away from traditional authority in both law and custom in the same manner as Jesus." We agree with Holtzmann in that it was not at all necessary that the trend of thot of each of the disciples should follow the same track; this probably was not the case. But in general their thot tended to nearly the same conclusions. And, we hold, that there was a sufficient amount of unison in their views to make the answer which Peter gave, one which would be coming from the entire group. The answer was given then, as one which they all could subscribe to in their own way.

Source of Their Opinion.

But where did the disciples gain their opinion of Jesus? Warschauer (1) locates the source as enaminating from the Transfiguration experience which he places previous to this experience. At that experience, those present, had been instructed to remain quiet, but at this time Peter carried away by his feelings, breaks the pledge imposed upon him and James and John, and bursts forth into the exclamation of acknowledgement to Jesus; which Jesus had commanded should not travel beyond this small group. Warschauer justifies the placing of the Transfiguration experience prior to the confession on two

1. Historical Life of Jesus. 198-201.

grounds: first, If Peter's statement had been made in the hearing of all the rest of the disciples, what was the object of a second revelation of the same fact to the three alone; it would only serve as an anti-climax. This argument of Warschauer's fails when the Transfiguration is viewed, as we view it, an experience not primarily of the disciples, but an experience of Jesus. The second point urged by Warschauer is: What is it that Jesus would have charged the three not to mention to the rest? The only fact which He pledged them to keep was -- His identity with the coming Messiah. It is perfectly natural that the Transfiguration experience follow the Confession under the view we have just mentioned as holding; because it may be looked upon as giving scriptural confirmation to this conviction of possible suffering and death. In view of these considerations we will have to reject Warschauer's view.

According to Bundy (1) it is evident from a consideration of the first three gospels that the disciples did not know Jesus as Messiah from the first. He also holds that there are no psychological antecedents down to this point which would furnish such a conviction and he is unable to account for their possession of the view. Plummer (2), on the other hand, thinks that from the first the disciples assented to the view that Jesus would prove the Messiah for whom all were longing. We agree with Bundy that the disciples did not know Jesus as Messiah from the first; but as to the 'antecedents', it is hardly possible that a group

1. Our Recovery of Jesus. 228.
2. Commentary on Matthew. 226.

of men so intimately associated with their leader, who was so full of this mission which He felt, would not build up by a gradual contact with Him their view concerning Him. We also must remember, that the gospel record which we have is by no means complete of all the activities of this group. To adopt the view of Plummer would involve the same developement that Jesus needed: namely, a change in their view as to the kind of Messiah He was. On the other hands forthe disciples to know that Jesus was the Messiah from the first would not only be unnatural but would strip any wonder from Jesus due to His attracting of these men, and would place their following of Jesus on thebasis of seeing in Him the fulfillment of the Messianic hopes. There would also be the most difficult accounting of how they would retain this view in the face of all the things which He did which were not in accordance with the popular conception of Messiah. This we will have to reject.

Wendt (1) offers a more satisfactory explanation when he says, "The confession by Peter was a free expression of the gradually matured conviction of the disciples, and can only be rightly explained by presupposing that Jesus did not then for the first time teach, but had already continuously taught, His disciples such a view of the kingdom of God as formed the true basis for their recognition of His already existing Messiahship." Eakin (2) confirms this with the words: "This conviction had formed itself in the minds of the disciples gradually, being based on what they had seen of His work and, even more, on the

1. Teachings of Jesus. Vol.1. 386.
2. Getting Acquainted with the New Testament, 364.

impression made by close personal contact with Him." And Kent (1) concurs when he says that it was the result of a long period of training.

The source of their view concerning Jesus may be grounded then in three places. The primary source, of course, would be Jesus. They had seen Him live and act in such a way that it was possible for them to believe Him to be the Messiah. They must also have been conscious of what the people were saying concerning Him. To be sure the general public viewed Jesus as a different kind of a Messiah than He wished to be, but at the same time there was their thot, which the disciples undoubtedly knew. Then the third source, was their own development. They had observed Him and could see in Him the qualities of the Messiah. Thus there had come to the disciples the thot which burst forth at this time: Jesus was the Messiah.

This raises for us the inquiry: Are the disciples ready for the question? It would seem from the answer which Peter gave that they were. The events of the past months had been very trying to them; if it were possible for the relations between Jesus and the disciples to become strained, such a time would have furnished a good basis. They had in a sense been tested; they remained true and loyal to Jesus and as a result of such a close companionship they were prepared to enter into the more serious phases of their activity with Jesus. To be sure they needed instruction, and even at Jerusalem in the final crisis they deserted

1. Life and Teachings of Jesus. 233.

Him; but the time had arrived when they were ready, from the standpoint of their own development, for this further insight: the external events had made such desirable.

The Messiah.

Did Jesus want the disciples to call Him Messiah? On this point we can only conjecture. We have found that this thot had been dominant in the mind of Jesus for some time; this event was an expression of the thing which Jesus had been thinking. Because of the questions which the disciples had asked at various times, He knew that they were thinking amongst themselves concerning Him. To have them think of Him as being the kind of Messiah He thot Himself to be, would be hoping too much. Yet it seems as if He did want them to name Him as they did.

To have this inner group name Jesus in this wise showed the tremenduous impression which He had made upon them. That they viewed Him in the light of the commonly accepted view of the Messiah, is what seems implied in the answer given by Peter. Dawson (1), says that Peter meant, "clearly the Christ of common Jewish tradition, a patriot, a deliverer, a soldier, a governor of men, a builder of empire, a second Solomon, a greater David." For: "we are not to suppose that St.Peter had by any means as yet a full conception of all that was implied in his own words. He did not understand what manner of Messiah he was confessing; but the merit was, that in spite of the rude

1. The Life of Christ. 228.

shocks which his faith had been receiving, and in spite of all that was paradoxical in the teachings and actions of Jesus, he saw thru his perplexities the gleams of a nature which transcended his experience, and he was willing to take upon trust what he could not comprehend."(1). This is confirmed by Rall (2), "They saw in Him all that the prophets had looked forward to, and all that their nation had longer and prayed for thru tha years, the Messiah of Jehovah." While this may be accepted; there needed to be some correcting of their view done before it would harmonize with the view of Jesus.

This conclusion of the disciples raises for us the question: To what extent had Jesus revealed Himself to the disciples? Mackintosh (3), would say that altho this was the first time when a subject such as this was made occasion of their conversation, "it does not follow that this is the first time . . . it suggested itself to the disciples. There are facts which indicate that the possibility of Him being the Messiah may have occured to His followers from the very outset." We can follow Mackintosh in the first part of his statement, but for the latter part we would prefer not to view the disciples as being at first attracted to Jesus because they thot that their Messianic were to be fulfilled by Jesus. This, we think, developed later. Bosworth (4) would hold that Jesus had revealed enough of Himself at some previous time so that the avowal by Peter would indicate that they were holding fast

1. Sanday. Outlines of the Life of Christ. 124.
2. The Life of Jesus. 102.
3. The Doctrine of the Person of Christ. 18.
4. The Life and Teachings of Jesus. 224.

to an earlier opinion. To this inquiry as to the amount which Jesus revealed to the disciples, Garvie (1) writes: "How much He first revealed we cannot confidently conjecture. But it was possibly just enough to arouse and to keep their attachment to Him, but not enough to relieve them of the task of discovering, as they did, for themselves how completely the prophecy of the Messiah was fulfilled in Him. And whatever expectations the disciples cherished at first, there was as much to contradict as to confirm them in the ministry of Jesus." This view of Garvie is satisfactory of this point.

That their conception of Messiah did not carry with it the idea of death is evidenced by the words of Peter: "Be it far from thee Lord: this shall never be unto thee."(2). Peter must have put this pretty strong to Jesus in order to incur such a severe rebuke as he was the recipient of in the next verse. Their view of the Messiah was confined to the bright side; they knew not the whole of the story. Such a partial view needed to be corrected.

According to the records whichwe have, Jesus did not deny the statement made by Peter. Instead He charged them to remain quiet.(3). Such action would seem to indicate that the impression left upon the disciples would be one of affirmation of their statement. For this was a very great moment for all concerned; and not to deny such a statement, would in all practical senses amount to subscribing to the

1. Studies in the Inner Life of Jesus. 245.
2. Matthew 16:22.
3. Matthew 16:20.

view. Then, also, the "blessing" (1) which Peter received immediately following would tend to confirm their thots. Holtzmann (2) says concerning this, "the excitement that must have been created amongst the disciples by this confirmation of Simon's daring words can scarcely be described."

This imposition of silence which Jesus imposed upon the disciples, according to Bulcock, "finds its most likely explanation in the fact that it was for a period not sufficiently formed, set and confirmed to be published to the world. The soul of Jesus was troubled; the discovery was too new, too sobering, too amazing even for Jesus." (3) This we cannot accept for such a view supposes that this consciousness had just dawned on Jesus; whereas we have pointed out, we feel that this occured at about the time of the baptism at the Jordan. Since that time the subsequent events had constantly influenced Jesus and gradually had He arrived at a new conception of the kind of Messiah He would be.

Jesus had now obtained from the disciples an expression of how they viewed Him. They had called Him the Messiah. To be sure their view of the Messiah was coloured in the popular colours, but nevertheless they had seen in Him such elements and qualities as would permit them to hold this view. In consequence, His work with them had not been in vain.

1. Matthew 16:17-19.
2. Life of Jesus. 3 25.
3. Religion and Its New Testament Expression. 154.

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If the disciples are to think of Jesus as Messiah it must be His kind of Messiah. Jesus realized He was the Messiah and that His Messiahship was of a certain kind; it was also necessary that the views of the disciples be the same. Therefore the first task which faced Him was to correct the views of the disciples into line with His.

The correction needed was to open for the disciples the possibility of His becoming a suffering Messiah. This was no easy task to accomplish. It meant that He was going contrary to all the hopes that had been ingrained in them concerning the Messiah; it meant going against the hope of a people, which they had held for centuries. It meant the breaking away from tradition; of loosening their hold on all that appeared solid and to completely revamp their views. It was no easy task which confronted Jesus. It was a severe task. Even after they had been instructed by Jesus they could not understand His s subsequent action in going to Jerusalem.

This process of correcting began at once. They were told that to be a follower of Him meant that they must deny themselves, take up his cross and follow Him. (1). Then they must lose their life for Him.(2). All other things may be lost if life is gained.(3) More fully did He define the cost involved in being a disciple. If anything cause a man to stumble then remove that which causes the stumbling, even if it is a hand or foot. (4)

1. Matthew 16:24.
2. Matthew 16:25.
3. Matthew 16:26.
4. Matthew 18:6-9.

To be a follower meant to give up everything and to place His cause first. (1). Teachings such as these would dispel from the disciples mind any thot of His being the fulfillment of the popular hope in a popular sense. Then had come the explicit warnings from Jesus that in all probability He would have to suffer.(2). This first correcting took place immediately following the confession by Peter (3); it was here that Jesus gave the first direct intimation that He might be a suffering Messiah.

The Future.

The failing experiences in Galilee had brot the gradually increasing suggestion that He might be a suffering Messiah. At Caesarea Philippi had come an expression of what He had been thinking. Immediately after had come the first passion warning. These warnings are the expression of a great probability that He might suffer. These warnings are not to be found previous to the confession by Peter.

The first warning, at Caesarea Philippi (4), came at the close of His public ministry in Galilee. He had fresh in His mind the abundant evidence of hostility of the people. Just previous to this warning the disciples and the people thot of Him as a prophet. These two together carried weighty considerations.

The second warning (5) was made following

1. Matthew 8:19-22.
2. Matthew 16:21 17:12 20:12.
3. Matthew 16:21.
4. Matthew 16:21.
5. Matthew 17:12.

the Transfiguration experience, which occured six days later.

The third of the passion warnings (1) was made as they were on their way to Jerusalem. Here Jesus took aside the Twelve and told them of the occurances which might happen. The Passion became more and more a distinctly anticipated reality to Jesus; more so as Jerusalem was approached.

Gilbert (2) says that the death of Jesus was alluded to in more or less secluded and obscure terms previous to the first direct warning. He had spoken of the removal of the bridegroom (3), of the destruction of the temple of His body (4), and of the sign of Jonah (5). But not until the days of Caesarea Philippi did He speak plainly and unmistakably of His death.

Why did Jesus come to think He might suffer? Some say that He knew all things and that He had always known He was to suffer. Theoretically this cannot be denied; but there were times when He asked for information; there were times when it seemed as if He were acting on faith and the best counsel which He had at the time to make use of. We are also told that He had a special revelation; and this interpreted rightly is satisfactory. For there were moments when there flashed on Him great revelations; His life was not of a static nature, but a series of waves, the crests of which would carry Him into great illuminating

1. Matthew 20:18.
2. Students Life of Jesus. 190.
3. Mark 2:20.
4. John 2:19.
5. Matthew 12:39-40.

moments. And this came thru a normal process of development and intuition. The authorities had opposed Him; there came a time when they were no longer satisfied merely to silence Him; the personal element had entered into the controversy; and a normal reading of the events and the way things were tending would lead Jesus to the fact that there might possibly await Him, in the end, suffering and death.(1).

When He fully reached this conclusion the Gospels do not tell us with definiteness. That He became aware of this previous to Caesarea Philippi, is without question. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the journey thru Decapolis had offered to Jesus increasingly the opportunity to see the trend of events and to arrive at some conclusion regarding them. The events which occur before this point find their realization here; and the events which follow are coloured by a new character. The period of ministry had been exceedingly active in Galilee. Constantly had He been called upon by the people and unceasingly had He given of Himself, so much so that He was almost continually in public. Then had come the last events just preceding this trip, with the great conflict with the scribes and the Pharisees. He had been thinking concerning these things, but now, away from Galilee, He was given the opportunity to better meditate upon the happenings. As a result, there came more clearly than ever, the idea that He might be a suffering Messiah; gradually growing into a conviction. There had come then, the crisis in the development as to the kind of Messiah

1. Dr. Lowstuter.

Jesus would be --- He would in all probability be a suffering Messiah. At Caesarea Philippi He had confided withthe disciples what He had been thinking as He read the experiences of the past.

To Jerusalem.

But the consideration which preceded, and which to some extent influenced this thot that He might be a suffering Messiah was the answer which He gave to the question: What is my next move? To return to Galilee seemed to be almost out of the question. For in the place where His work had begun with such promise, there were now the conspiring Pharisees and Herodians, and a people who had turned on Him. To go to the Gentile lands would amount practically to the giving up of His mission. As Rall (1) says, "Only the way to Jerusalem was open. There He could make the last appeal to His people." The thing which Jesus had to decide was whether or not He would go to Jerusalem. He decided to go. At Caesarea Philippi comes the first expression of the decision which He had made.

It was not without forseeing what might happen there that Jesus turned His face to Jerusalem. For, "The spirit that had opposed Him in Galilee was far stronger in the city. He had met its emissaries, who had come down to censure and oppose. With them He would find the priestly party, with whom He had as little in common as with the Pharisees. (2) And, Life in the time in which

1-2. New Testament History. 112.

Jesus lived, "was exceddingly cheap from the point of view of the ruling classes, and capital punishment for what might in modern times be regarded as only slight offences was of common occurance. The Scriptures themselves prescribed the death penalty even for ritualistic transgressions. And the religious contemporaries of Jesus might very conscientiously have condemned Him to be stoned because of His violations of the Sabbath, even if not for His laxity in the matter of clean and unclean foods."(1)

But so far as the Gospels implying that Jesus went to Jerusalem to die, we do not find that necessarily there. That He might die is conceded, but that He went there with the direct purpose of giving His life in death, this we will have to pass by. Because when Jesus gets there He works and ministers like He hoped to accomplish something. He did not act like a man who was merely waiting to die; but He acted like a man, who thot He might do some good in the city. But He was ever faced with the probability He might suffer and die.

Then, what should He do concerning the disciples? Should He take them, or should He go alone? He was probably aware of the possibility that there might come to them the same fate He might meet if they were along. Should He expose them to it? If He did not take them, then where would they go? To go back to Galilee, without any connection with Him, would amount virtually to returning to their secular life. For them to stay in the Greek

1. Case. Jesus. 320-321.

territory, while He went to Jerusalem, would avail nothing. For them to go with Him would be advantageous; for then they could all attend the Passover; the period of instruction could continue. Working together in the great capital city might produce results. For Jesus to leave them and to sever connections with them while He went to Jerusalem, would amount almost to a complete severance. Also, it is most likely that even tho Jesus would have desired to leave the disciples, they would have something to say about it and would have sought to go. Therefore, it would seem, as if it were necessary for them to go with Jesus.

Was this trip to Jerusalem a new trip? Probably not. It is most likely that Jesus had often been in the city. Especially is this true when we consider the following verse: "Now Judas also, who betrayed him, knew the place; for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples." (1). It was to a city with which He was well acquainted that Jesus turned His face from the north country.

Can the ultimate death of Jesus and His betrayal in Jerusalem be sourced in this event at Caesarea Philippi? Judas, we know, betrayed Jesus. It is hardly an action which would occur upon the spur of the moment: rather it is the type of action which would be the result of a period of dissatisfaction. The announcement at Caesarea Philippi that He was the Messiah, in view of the previous refusal to conform with the wishes of the people, might give the seeds

1. John 18:2.

of the betrayal by Judas. Garvie (1) develops this well, when he writes, "We must not suppose that Jesus foreknew Judas' betrayal when He called Him to become a disciple; but we may suppose that with His insight into the moral and spiritual condition of others He discovered the beginnings of estrangement and treachary in Judas even before Judas himself was fully aware of his change of feeling and aim. Jesus' refusal of the Kingship would be the first blow to Judas' loyalty; the declaration of the approaching passion by Jesus would be the second." This together with the now known Messiahship of Jesus would complete the picture. The jealous nature of Judas began to gain ascendency; thots, elusive and forboding began to creep into the mind of Judas. Peter had assumed a more prominent place than Judas when He acknowledged Jesus as Messiah at Caesarea Philippi. And, had not Judas been omitted from that close group who had gone to the mountain with Jesus, where the Transfiguration took place? These things Judas could not stand. They piled up as the days went by. He simply could not see his Messiah as one who would not accede to the popular demands of Messiahship. These things so pent up in the inner life of Judas received the last touch, when he was not accorded the first place at the Last Supper. (2) It is althogether possible and probable that the crisis at Caesarea Philippi became the event which yields the source of the ultimate Passion in Jerusalem; the key being Judas.

Did this decision to go to Jerusalem involve

1. Studies in the Inner Life of Jesus. 322-323.
2. John 13:23.

in it a change or shift in His plans, as He outlined them in His thot? Rall (1) treats this phase satisfactorily: "the journey though perhaps a change in His plans, was not a change in His spirit or method. Here, again, the story of the temptation outlines His later life. The finger of God pointed to Jerusalem, it was His to go, His duty was not to save Himself, but to trust God; not to find His own way, but to obey. If God's way led to Jerusalem and death, then suffering and death were a part of God's plan and of His work. Some glimpse of the greatness of His spirit comes to us as we look at this step. There is His independence of thot. His spiritual insight is His own; it is not dependent on others. Neither did the teachers of His day know anything of a suffering Messiah. Yet at the moment when He takes His place before His disciples as Messiah He begins to declare that He is the Messiah that must serve and suffer and die."

Therefore, we have in Caesarea Philippi, the expression of what Jesus had been gradually realizing as He pondered concerning the failure to compel the people to follow Him. As the result of this there came the thot that He would go to Jerusalem and see if He could not yet win out. This opened the possibility that He might have to suffer if He did this and might result in His death. But when Jesus arrived at the conclusion of His thot in this matter, it was not possible for Him to contain it within Himself and at Caesarea Philippi He confided with the disciples His thot.

1. New Testament History. 112.

Summary and Conclusion.

The event under consideration was found recorded in the three Synoptic Gospels. While the historicity has been questioned: we view it as historical.

The events of His ministry had forced Jesus to consider seriously the kind of Messiah He should be. Even at the height of His ministry there had appeared trouble. The real basis of this trouble and the difference with the people is to be found in the fact that the people were what they were and He was what He was, regarding religious attitudes. These differences found expression in concrete instances which aroused opposition: He was a friend of publicans and sinners; He forgave sins; He had a different view of the Sabbath; He was not orthodox as regards the Scriptures; He had a new conception of the kingdm of God; His assumption of authority; the people thot He came to destroy the Law; the feeding of the five thousand and other instances. The conflict became more acute over the question of ritual observance and His refusal to give a sign. It was advisable to leave. There followed the journey into the north country finally reaching Caesarea Philippi.

In the eyes of the people Jesus at first stood as a possible fulfillment of their Messianic hopes. Their view of Messiah was of a kingly nature. The view of Jesus varied from this. In all probability He thot of Himself as Messiah from the time of the baptism. Since that time there had been a development as to the kind of Messiah He should

be. This was an unfolding process, with the events of His ministry playing their part in the directing of His thot along the lines of the kind of Messiahship His would be. It is not possible to judge this development with precision; but we may assume that previous to Caesarea Philippi the logic of the circumstances forced home the thot that He would be a suffering Messiah.

When this point was reached He was faced with the problem of whether or not He should tell the disciples. He chose to do so. The first question concerned the people. The answer received, which we feel represented the thot of the people at this time, was that He was simply the forerunner of the Messiah. The question of John the Herald reflects the doubts of thepeople concerning Jesus.

Then had followed the question put to the disciples. There are evidences that they had been talking amongst themselves as to who He was. The answer which He received is to be interpreted as meaning the commonly looked for Messiah. The source of their opinion is to be found in their constant association. The view of the disciples varied from the view of Jesus. Therefore it was necessary that it be brot into harmony with His view; it needed to be corrected. The correcting was commenced at once; opening to the disciples the thot that possibily He might have to suffer and even die. This correction was achieved by indicating the serious cost of being His follower and by the passion warnings.

In deciding to go to Jerusalem, Jesus foresaw

the trouble which might result. He weighed the question as to whether take the disciples and decided to do so. It was not the first time they had been there. It is possible that Caesarea Philippi did much to influence the thot of Judas, leading eventually to the betrayal by Judas. This decision to go to Jerusalem might have involved a change in His plans so far as action was concerned, but was in harmony with His first decision reached in the wilderness that wherever the finger of God pointed, there He would go.

The development of this thesis has indicated that the contention made at the outset is fully justified, namely:That Caesarea Philippi was a crisis to the disciples in their thot concerning Jesus; a correction was needed to bring it in harmony with Jesus', that correction was given in subsequent events, they being introduced to the probability that He might be a suffering Messiah. Caesarea Philippi was a crisis to Jesus in that it was an expression of what He had been thinking, He confided His inner thot with the disciples, a thot which had gradually assumed concreteness and took the shape of a conviction that He might probably suffer and die, a conviction which was forced home by the logic of the circumstances; and Caesarea Philippi was also a crisis as concerned His next move: He decided to go to Jerusalem and to take the disciples with Him.

In view of these developments we were right in assuming the title of this thesis,namely: "The Crisis at Caesarea Philippi".

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